

Application No. 10/051,390
Amendment dated February 27, 2004
Response to Office Action dated August 27, 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Objections to the drawings

Applicant has amended the drawings as suggested by the Examiner to overcome the objections to the drawings. Specifically, Applicant has added reference numeral 1 to Figure 1 and added Figure 2, which provides a flow chart illustrating the operation of an airbag system of the invention. Furthermore, Applicant has amended the specification to add a description of Figure 2.

Objection to the specification

Applicant has amended the specification as suggested by the Examiner to overcome the objection to the specification. Specifically, Applicant has replaced the word "lightweight" with "light in weight" in paragraph [0015].

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 8, 9, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by EP 0 733 519. For the following reasons, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

There is a fundamental difference between the claimed invention and EP 0 733 519. In the claimed invention, both ignition chambers of the airbag system are ignited, and the airbag system decides which chamber to ignite first before the other chamber is ignited, based on at least one person-specific or impact-specific signal. In other words, the ignition chambers are ignited consecutively, and the order of ignition can be reversed.

In EP 0 733 519, on the other hand, there are only three possible ways of igniting the two chambers (see Figure 5): (1) the first chamber is ignited before the second chamber, (2) only the first chamber is ignited (and the second chamber is not ignited), and (3) only the second chamber is ignited (and the first chamber is not ignited). In other words, EP 0 733 519 does not teach that the second chamber can be ignited before the first chamber is ignited. Further, EP 0 733 519 does not teach that the ignition sequence of the two chamber can be reversed. Therefore, EP 0 733 519 is no different from the prior art devices discussed in the background section of the present application.

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In conclusion, EP 0 733 519 does not teach every limitation of claims 1, 8, 9, and 12 and therefore cannot anticipate the claims.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

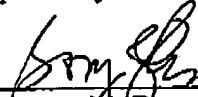
Claims 2-7, 10, and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over EP 0 733 519 in view of Steffens (U.S. Patent 5,626,359). As discussed above, EP 0 733 519 does not teach or suggest at least one limitation of independent claims 1 and 9 and thus dependent claims 2-7, 10, and 11. In addition, the Office Action did not allege that Steffens teaches or suggests this limitation. Therefore, the Office Action has not established that the cited references teach or suggest every element of dependent claims 2-7, 10, and 11 and therefore has not established a prima facie case of obviousness.

In light of the foregoing remarks, this application is considered to be in condition for allowance, and early passage of this case to issue is respectfully requested. If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (CAM # 080437.50738US).

Respectfully submitted,

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